

Minister on message at AoC conference



John Hayes, Minister for FE, addresses delegates at the AoC Annual Conference and Exhibition this week

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Pictures by Nick Linford

Monday 21 November 2011

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Marilyn Hawkins



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'Worry' over 12 per cent fall in FE adults

FE Week Exclusive

Nick Reinis

@fenickr

Concerns have been raised over the decline in total adult FE participation at a time when the numbers of adult apprenticeships are surging.

Government data for 2010/11 shows the number of learners aged 19 and over in government funded FE and skills provision is 3,129,200; an 11.6 per cent drop from 3,540,500 the previous year.

Total participation in Adult Safeguarded Learning (ASL) is also down 10 per cent from 762,400 to 685,800. In 2009/10, 99 per cent of participants in ASL were aged 19 or over, so NIACE say that this decrease represents "a significant drop" in the number of adult learners.

At the same time, and what also has been well documented, is the dramatic increase in 19+ apprentice-

ship starts, from 162,900 in 2009/10 to 314,400 in 2010/11; a jump of some 93 per cent.

Although not surprised, the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) is concerned.

David Hughes, chief executive of NIACE, said it can be difficult to say why there has been a drop, before adding: "There are a number of big concerns with participation numbers dropping.

"We are worrying about who is learning and, by definition, who also isn't learning. Are some people missing?

"Are people learning the right things and getting the right support to benefit them in their lives? That's really critical. Also, is what's being offered what people want? Will the quality suffer?"

However, Mr Hughes added: "This hasn't really surprised us. It's very clear this year that participation had slowed. Maybe we're seeing a reverse of gains we've had in previ-

ous years."

A drop in ASL participation is expected, say NIACE, in tough economic times, as it is the part of the system most "heavily reliant on fee income" and numbers will decrease as "disposable income is squeezed".

He added: "The danger is we lose them in the recession, which will be a shame and won't put us in the right position when the economy picks up again. Skills, learning and development have to be at the heart of that."

As budgets are squeezed, NIACE say it is "crucial to ensure any drive to increase numbers does not lead to a compromise on quality".

They also say the expansion in apprenticeships has raised questions around whether shorter frameworks can deliver the rigorous learning experience the apprenticeship brand is associated.

Mr Hughes said: "There's less money and more is being directed at things that cost more. Appren-

ticeships cost more than NVQs, but that's not a bad thing because the return is higher.

"But the balance is something that concerns us."

He added: "Apprenticeship investment is based on average prices. So if it's right for some, then clearly it's wrong for others.

"Also, if the length of stay is shorter then you have to think if the right amount of money is being paid.

"A 12-week course doesn't need as much as a longer course."

NIACE also say a relevant curriculum offer is important, but information, advice and guidance is also key to ensuring learners are getting the right help to access and succeed in learning.

Mr Hughes said: "The new National Careers Service will be a vital information resource for those seeking to enter or advance in learning and it must be accessible and impartial if we are to see participation levels meaningfully increased."

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Victory for teacher training campaigners

Nick Reinis

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Bursaries are to be made available to ensure further education (FE) teachers are “the best in the world”.

John Hayes, the minister for FE, skills and lifelong learning, announced at the Association of Colleges (AoC) Annual Conference and Exhibition on Tuesday that funding will be available for initial teacher training (ITT).

However, he stopped short of detailing how much money will form the bursary, saying: “We will work out the details.

“If we don’t do it, FE will be at a disadvantage.”

The news should come as a welcome riposte to the Institute for Learning (IfL) which last week expressed concerns about teacher training reforms and the implications on funding changes for ITT.

With schools able to attract up to £20,000 bursaries for training, the IfL feared the sector’s ability to attract experts into teaching could suffer, with current cohorts already held down by financial commitments such as mortgages.

However, the organisation is sure to seek clarification on Mr Hayes’ announcement, which came as part of eight measures which are due to be come out following the release of the New Challenges, New Chances consultation.

They included making £25 million available this year to tackle rising youth unemployment, which has now hit the one million mark.

He said: “Because of the urgency of this issue we are making up to £25 million available this academic year to increase capacity to improve skills and employment prospects of the most disengaged young people.”

Mr Hayes also revealed a plan to “accelerate speed of change” in terms of the deregulation of colleges, while also the need to create stability.

He said: “That is why I will continue to argue for colleges to be given three-year budgets, of the sort universities have enjoyed for decades.”

Another point he set out included the delivery of more higher education in colleges, with the current 20,000 places “a beginning, not an end”.

Nick Reinis

@fenickr

Smaller businesses are to be given cash incentives to take on apprentices under new plans announced by Business Secretary Vince Cable.

As part of the government’s plan for growth, Mr Cable has announced action to make it easier for companies to take on apprentices.

He told businesses in London yesterday the government would slash the red tape and “guarantee” quality of apprenticeships.

Mr Cable outlined four measures, including the offer of up to £1,500 to employers with less than 50 employees if they take on a young apprentice aged 16 to 24. It will support up to 20,000

He added: “We will redefine higher learning through the accelerated development of level 4 and 5 apprenticeship frameworks. I will shortly announce the first round successful bids for funding for this step change.”

Mr Hayes also alluded to further plans for apprenticeships and how he asked the AoC to “develop...a global strategy for FE”.

He also set out a plan to deliver workshops, through the AoC, on the outcomes of Colleges in the Communities report.

However, his final announcement was to reveal the independent review of professionalism in FE - announced in September - will be undertaken by David Sherlock CBE and Dawn Ward OBE Burton and South Derbyshire College.

He said: “This summer, we gave you another document; New Challenges, New Chances.

“It cements the strategy by responding again to what you have said.

“Following the consultation to which so many of you responded - we’re now on the verge of another package of reforms.

He added: “The...reforms will be designed to help you plan for years - at least until the end of this Parliament - and to do so the ephemera of spin and soft soap must be washed away, replaced by a cleansing long term vision.

“No different strategy on my watch. This plan will last. And I can assure you that these plans will not be a lurch in an entirely new direction.

“On the contrary, they will follow the direction of travel that Skills for Sustainable Growth set a year ago and to which you contributed so much.”

He added: “My vision is a sector freed from governments that predict and provide. Free to reflect and respond to what it sees around it.”

Mr Hayes also admitted to having some critics to his plans.

He said: “Some cynics claim me declining to tell you what to do and how to do it will lead to chaos. They say you’re not ready for freedom. That by me trusting you “mere anarchy is loosed upon the world”

“I prefer another of Yeats’ memorable phrases, “a terrible beauty is born”. The beauty I envisage of is the beauty of imagination; the beauty of creative minds. And its only terror is the thrill of new.”

New apprentice incentive for smaller businesses

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new apprenticeships in 2012/13.

He also said processes will be simplified to make it quicker for employers to take on an apprentice, including streamlining health and safety requirements.

The third measure is a “renewed focus on targeting the programme where apprenticeships deliver greatest value”.

Apprenticeship providers, Mr Cable announced, will also be required to offer training in English and maths up to the standard of a good GCSE (level 2) for all apprenticeships.

Mr Cable said: “The apprenticeships programme is a success story, with record numbers of learners starting an apprenticeship this year.

“But I have listened to employers, and will go further to ensure investment is targeted where

NCG merger collapses

Plans for a merger between the NCG (formerly Newcastle College Group) and Northumberland College have collapsed.

The Northumberland College Corporation met on Wednesday and agreed to “rescind” the decision on July 13 to merge with NCG, which offered an investment of £25 million over the next four years.

However, Northumberland College Corporation’s said the merger proposal “had materially changed and a merger with NCG no longer represented the best solution” for students, staff, stakeholders and community.

They also say they received a letter from John Hayes, minister for further education, skills and lifelong learning, on Tuesday and the “views he expressed also formed a major part of the decision” made by the Corporation.

Northumberland College Corporation’s board will now consider other alternative options to secure the future of the college.

Chris Todd, principal of Northumberland College said: “Students, staff and stakeholders did not want this merger to happen. The Corporation have listened to these concerns and have made the right choice in the interests of Northumberland.”

Dame Jackie Fisher, chief executive of NCG, said “We are disappointed Northumberland College has rejected our merger proposal. We remain committed to supporting learners in the North East and we are considering an alternative strategy to give learners in the county the opportunity to gain skills in an up-to-date, clean, pleasant and safe environment.”

NCG’s investment plans included updating Northumberland College’s Ashington site, a new campus at Cramlington, replacing the agricultural training facilities at Kirkley Hall and create modern job-focused teaching facilities on a real working farm.

Mr Fisher said: “NCG made a generous merger offer to Northumberland College. The Governors of Northumberland decided to reject our offer. We cannot comment on their reasons for doing so.”

However, Mr Todd added: “Northumberland College has a strong plan going forward and we have demonstrated substantial improvement over the last twelve months.”

impact is greatest, delivering the specific skills businesses need to drive growth.”

He added: “Apprenticeships are proven to boost the life chances of young people, and are a sound investment in our future competitiveness. So when times are tough, it’s right that we provide additional support to help the smallest firms meet training costs.

“We’ll cut no corners on quality. Apprenticeships will remain the gold standard for excellence in vocational training - but where red tape serves no purpose, we’ll strip it away.”

FE minister John Hayes said: “By continuing to drive up standards and reaching out to small businesses, we’ll create a culture in which values, drives and rewards vocational excellence and fuels economic and social progress.”

Call to scrap adult apprenticeships as young jobless hits one million

Nick Summers

@summersnicholas

Apprenticeships should be restricted to learners under the age of 25, according to researchers from the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR).

The proposals, outlined in a new book launched at the Association of Colleges (AoC) Annual Conference, include increasing the funding for pre-apprenticeship training by applying an age limit to all apprenticeship starts.

Tess Lanning, a research fellow at IPPR and Tony Dolphin, IPPR's senior economist argue that while training adults is important, it's damaging to call it an apprenticeship.

"Increasing the number of apprenticeships that are offered to people aged 25 and over has diluted the important role that they should play in socialising young people and preparing them for the world of work," the report states.

"Adult apprenticeships cannot exist by definition and the government should limit them to young people. Apprenticeships should not be just another form of on-the-job training; they should be something special, easing the transition of young people into work through a mix of on-the-job specific training and more general off-the-job learning.

"People who have already been in the labour market for a number of years require other types of training. There is a case for the government to create a stronger adult skills system that supports people to cope with economic change, but apprenticeships are not the appropriate vehicle."

The pair add that pre-apprenticeship training should be used to help young people who are unemployed and "lack even the most basic skills required by employers" to get onto an apprenticeship scheme.

"The apprenticeship 'brand' should be reserved for young people developing the skills they need to flourish in the labour market.

"We are sceptical about the quality of some apprenticeships offered to older workers and believe they offer a poor return to the government, compared to helping young people prepare for an apprenticeship."

'Rethinking apprenticeships' was launched by John Hayes, Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning at the AoC Annual Conference and Exhibition in Birmingham.

Speaking at the conference, Mr Hayes said: "What we have asked apprenticeships to do is to fill a much bigger spectrum than they have done traditionally.

"They are the principal in which to retrain and up-skill our existing workforce."

Mr Hayes added that the government's strategy would be to incentivise the employment of young people, rather than making the employment of older people less attractive.

The minister has written a chapter in the book outlining new government priorities that will ensure apprenticeships are 'no longer to be seen as the poor relation of academic study'.

The Minister states that training in new areas such as advanced engineering, information technology and the creative industries will help re-establish apprenticeships as the

'primary form' of practical training.

The report also says that level 2 apprenticeships need to be clearly branded as an 'intermediate' qualification to learners in order to encourage them to progress to higher levels.

"I want many more apprenticeships to be at higher levels, up to degree level and even above. The government has announced a higher apprenticeship fund, worth £25m, which will support up to 10,000 more advanced and higher apprenticeships," Mr Hayes said.

Mr Hayes also said FE colleges are the 'great unheralded triumph' of the education system, and would be given even greater freedoms by the coalition.

"We are replacing the costly regime of centralisation with genuine devolution of power within the system.

"The government's primary role is to create a framework that helps individuals and their employers to get the learning they want or need.

"An indispensable part of achieving this goal is removing the barriers in the way of learning providers' efforts to respond to what their customers are demanding."

Other contributors include Martin Doel, Chief Executive of the Association of Colleges (AoC), who published the book in partnership with the IPPR.

Mr Doel said apprenticeships should take influence from the German 'meister' model and teach young people general skills, as well as English and maths at FE colleges.

"Particularly for young people, an apprenticeship's value in the labour market lies as much in its teaching of general skills as its occupational training," Mr Doel said.

"There is a good case for a strong core offer, delivered in partnership with colleges, for young people, not just those under 19 but perhaps up to the age of 25.

"Those aged under 19 should certainly enjoy time off-the-job for learning equivalent to that in Germany, so they can learn not just English and maths but also the generic skills that will stand them in good stead in an economy where adaptability scores highly."

Mr Doel added that learners aged 25 and above need a completely different apprenticeship model in order to become a 'meister', or a highly skilled craftsman or woman.

"Apprentices aged 27 may have been working for a decade, and have gained many of the personal, learning and thinking skills that are so essential in the SASE framework.

"They may want, not just level 3 courses, but highly advanced level 4 and 5 apprenticeships where they either learn the skills needed to become a manager or to become what the Germans would call a meister."

The book was released ahead of new figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) which showed youth unemployment had topped one million.

The ONS said: "The number of unemployed people aged from 16 to 24 increased by 67,000 over the quarter to reach 1.02 million; this figure includes 286,000 people in full-time education who were looking for part-time work.

"The unemployment level and rate for people aged from 16 to 24 are the highest since directly comparable records began in 1992."

'Trust' is key for new college freedoms

Nick Reinis

@fenickr

As the saying goes, all good relationships are built on trust - and it seems that motto can be extended to the world of further education (FE).

The link to the old adage was made during the Association of Colleges (AoC) Annual Conference and Exhibition 2011 on Tuesday, when more powers due to be handed to colleges were discussed.

Lord Hill of Oareford, parliamentary secretary of state for schools at the Department for Education, said: "We want a system based more on trust, with institutions having more autonomy to exercise their own professional judgements."

He then outlined how education reform, set out in the Education Bill, which completed its journey through Parliament on Monday, will apply post-16.

Lord Hill said: "We are keen that ministers and officials take a step back as much as possible and trust the profession more.

"So, we are legislating to give colleges more freedom. More freedom to borrow and invest for example.

"Thanks to our Education Bill you won't have to go cap in hand to the chief executive of the Skills Funding Agency or the LA or the secretary of state to borrow even the smallest amount of money."

He also pointed to "scrapping power of a government body to appoint up to two members of the college Governing Body" and giving colleges

the ability to amend their Instruments and Articles as steps to make them "freer".

Lord Hill also discussed enrolment and the plans to directly take on students aged 14-16, as "colleges have expert teachers and facilities to offer high quality vocational options" with a core curriculum.

However, the finer details of this, Lord Hill said, need to be discussed with the AoC and their sibling, the Sixth Form Colleges Forum.

The Lord went on, saying: "Giving institutions greater autonomy needs to be matched with greater accountability.

"The current accountability system does not yet apply equally across the different types of 16-19 education.

"We want a system driven by and rewards success in getting young people into skilled work and higher education, not driven by financial incentives."

To do this, the DfE plans to put in measures to show student progress, reform performance tables to reflect achievement, and exempt outstanding colleges and providers from Ofsted inspections.

Finally, Lord Hill discussed the buzz word of the moment; simplification.

He described the current funding system as "complicated" and talked of the need to make it "clearer, more transparent and easier to understand by all" which is why, Lord Hill says, they launched the 16-19 funding formula review in October.

The consultation ends on January 4, 2012. He said: "It is vital that we get this right so I would urge you to contribute to the consultation."



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Connie Vitello, Initial Assessment, ALS and Assistive Technologies Co-ordinator at The Manchester College said: "Achievement and success rates are high as all learners are placed on the correct level of course. The bksb diagnostic assessment ILP clearly identifies a learner's weak areas, so that they can upskill the relevant areas required. The bksb learning resources greatly assist learners in upskilling their weak areas - thus achieving on the course. We are not aware of any other product which will provide the range and quality of learning and reporting for the students and the college."

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Simon Hughes says apprenticeships need to be explained more clearly to learners

Nick Summers

@summersnicholas

Apprenticeships and vocational training need to be explained more clearly to learners, according to Simon Hughes MP.

The deputy leader of the Liberal Democrats said the number of vocational qualifications needed to be simplified into a “menu” of options that is clearer for both parents and young people.

Mr Hughes told *FE Week* at the ICG Conference: “What is the best set of offers to make in terms of apprenticeship options?”

“Is it going to be a conventional three or four year apprenticeship, where you’re splitting your time between the work and getting back to day release colleges, or is it going to be a much more intensive one year apprenticeship for a certain set of skills?”

“We need a real menu which describes the options.”

Mr Hughes also said that learners needed to understand the qualifications associated with each apprenticeship, and then be able to make an educated decision about whether or not it’s worthwhile.

“I feel that youngsters are often misled into

thinking this is going to be good for me, this is going to be valid, and sometimes they’re just Mickey Mouse non qualifications,” Mr Hughes said.

“We need to make sure we just try and give honest assessments, because otherwise we get schools who are going to be asked to present their destination statistics - and they will not be nearly as keen if what they send people onto are things that in UCAS points terms, don’t count for anything.”

FE Week discovered in September that some learners are being forced to turn down apprenticeships, or have their families risk losing vital benefits payments.

Some families could lose their child benefit and child tax credits if a young person starts an apprenticeship on £2.60 an hour, the national apprentice minimum wage.

Commenting on the issue, Mr Hughes said: “There needs to be a menu of prices for parents too, so that they know the implications for them, and the implications of the system.

“It needs to be done in a way that’s centrally available, and I think it should be done independently of government.”

Mr Hughes also said he thought colleges and schools will become better at providing

information about vocational courses in the future.

“There is a potential opportunity that because people are fearful of the whole university fees ‘hoo-ha’, there’s actually going to be more effort about communicating into schools,” Mr Hughes said.

“I think there will be a much more effective communication into schools and colleges. It’s in the government’s interest that it should be, so they need to coordinate them and other people getting their act together to give the information very simply, very directly, and starting early.”



Picture by Nick Linford

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FE Week profile

Marilyn Hawkins ~ her story

Janet Murray

@jan_murray

Principal of Barnet and Southgate College talks to *FE Week*

“It has been an incredibly unplanned, coincidental journey,” says Marilyn Hawkins, principal of Barnet and Southgate College and the incoming chair of the 157 Group, of her thirty-year career in further education.

She had an idyllic childhood of “good weather, swimming pools and being outdoors” in Trinidad. When she moved back to the UK at 15, she set her sights on a career in medicine, but left school at 17 to care for her mother, who was seriously ill. “My school were horrified about me giving up on my dream, but I just had to be there for her,” she recalls.

But it was a decision that altered the course of life completely. After her mother’s death, instead of going back to finish her ‘A’ levels, Hawkins enrolled on a pre-nursing course at Ipswich College and went on to train as a nurse, midwife and health visitor.

By the late 1970s, Hawkins had three young children and was looking for a new challenge, when she spotted an advert for a job at Chester College, supporting health, social care and childcare programmes. After ten years as a health care professional, it felt like a natural progression for her. “If you have come from a caring background you are often the instructor. Someone is having a baby, and to put it bluntly, you are like ‘Do this, this and this.’ So you are very much in that role,” she says.

“In 48 hours, I had to decide whether to leave a bereaved child on his own in Nottingham or bring him into a completely unsupported area”

Over the decade that followed, Hawkins worked as a lecturer at Chester, Crew, South Cheshire, North Worcester and Walsall Colleges (moving regularly due to her husband’s job), ending up at the Birmingham College of Food in 1989 (now University College, Birmingham) where she discovered a passion for food and drink and took on a senior leadership role as vice-principal. “I literally learned how to drink,” she recalls. “One, I studied wine and spirits, but secondly learned how to keep up with the men. What I used to do was drink between the top of the glass and about a quarter of an inch and it was topped back up again, so everyone thought I was keeping up.”

But after several years at the college,

Hawkins took a sideways move. While she loved working in a catering environment, she was worried about “getting stuck in a cul-de-sac” of food and hospitality, when she was looking to broaden her horizons. Taking a vice-principal post at Plymouth College was significant because, it was the first time her husband had ever moved with her for a job, she says. And for the first time she started to think “I am going to be a principal.”

But when the feedback came back from her first, unsuccessful attempt to secure a principal’s job, she was surprised to learn her interviewers had thought she came across like a “shy, retiring flower.”

Dismissing the feedback as “ridiculous,” her own principal sent her on a course on women’s leadership roles, which culminated in a session with an image consultant, who advised Hawkins – amongst other things – never to wear dangly earrings, give a presentation with her jacket open or shop in Marks & Spencers. “She put my handbag on her finger, sniffed and said ‘Never spend less than £100 on a handbag ever again. And I haven’t,’” says Hawkins, laughing. “But I did listen...and I did get the next job.”

After four years as principal of Grimsby College, Hawkins was offered a job as one of 47 executive directors at the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), which meant another move – this time to Lincolnshire and Rutland. But while it was a good experience overall, going from leading a staff of several hundred and several thousand students to “rattling about in a building without an agenda” was hard. While tempted to leave just three weeks into the job (after being “heavily headhunted” by a London college, she reveals), Hawkins decided to give it a “credible period” of two years, after which she took up her current post at Barnet College.

But there were very tough times ahead. It quickly became apparent that the college was in “very difficult financial circumstances and its quality was satisfactory”. Then, nine months into the job, Hawkins’s husband dropped dead suddenly of a heart attack. And on the very same day, she was diagnosed with cancer – for the third time in her life.

Hawkins was left with the agonising decision of whether to move her youngest son, who was midway through his GCSEs, to London or leave him in Nottingham, living with neighbours.

“It was so difficult because I had been here nine months, I had no support group,” she recalls. “In 48 hours, I had to decide whether to leave a bereaved child on his own in Nottingham or bring him into a completely unsupported area.”

After much soul searching, she opted to leave her son in Nottingham, staying in London during the week and spending weekends with him at the family home, a decision she will “never ever know if it was right or wrong,” she says.

The years that followed were equally tough. Hawkins opted (as she had done the previous two times she had been diagnosed with a primary cancer) not to share her diagnosis – and subsequent treatment – with the wider



Picture by Nick Linford

college community. Meanwhile, she tried – unsuccessfully, she admits – to “plan her way” out of bereavement.

“I took a very academic analysis of bereavement: ‘what do the books say, how do you do this?’ The whole thing was an attempt to plough myself out of it – and you can’t. But I don’t know that I was able to accept that I couldn’t.”

What did help was joining a French evening class at the college, where she found great support from fellow students. “Although I did want to improve my French, I joined the class because I didn’t know anyone and I was here in the evening on my own. Those students formed part of that support group at the time.”

One of the best pieces of advice she was given at the time (and one she now shares with staff who suffer bereavement) was to accept every single invitation she received. “You get an invite, you go. I don’t care if you don’t want to go, I don’t care if you enjoy yourself – but it fills that bit of space that otherwise would be that much bleaker.”

It was following this advice that led her to meet her current husband through friends of friends and have the “fairy tale ending” she hadn’t anticipated. “I got into a conversation with him [her second husband] about how he was also recently bereaved and we said: ‘Shall we have a cup of coffee and share how awful this is?’ which we did. We had brunch in Smiths of Smithsfield in The Barbican, and the rest is history.”

Professionally it is an invigorating time for Hawkins, who took over the reigns from City

& Islington principal Frank McLoughlin as 157 Group chair earlier this month. Barnet College recently merged with Southgate College, which as someone who sees herself as “the innovator, the inventor of the next phase” is exactly the kind of challenge she thrives on. For the 157 Group it is a transition time.

But it is not uncommon for Hawkins to work a 70-hour week (although she is trying to reduce this to 60, she says). She puts her stamina down to being a ‘high-energy’ person. Despite her long working week, she’s often up early at weekends walking the countryside with her husband. And since remarrying, she also has a “huge family” of five children and six grandchildren, which keeps her busy.

Hawkins is also a self-confessed “Francophile” and food and wine buff. “My colleagues, friends and family, and my husband in particular, do not enjoy coming into a restaurant with me. They sometimes say to me: ‘Can you please not give feedback?’ But I can’t help it. If I am facing the kitchen my husband tries to move me so I can’t actually see that the chef has got his teeth on the clingfilm before he puts it on.”

But, she says, she has no plans for retirement just yet. In fact she is “totally allergic” to the word and anyone who mentions it is likely to get their head bitten off, she says. What has always – and continues to motivate her – about working in the sector, is “being humbled by the inordinate success” of learners. “At the end of the day, it’s not about the buildings or inspection reports. It’s about the people and the life changing that we do.”

FE Week Advertorials

Opening up the hidden labour market



The Association of College's Conference and Exhibition has been a very exciting time for NCFE as we announced the launch of our exciting venture with Reed in Partnership, which will have great benefit to colleges across the UK.

The REED NCFE Partnership offers a flexible solution for colleges and training providers looking to support their students from learning into work and apprenticeships. It aims to enhance their employability reputation and to maximise learner destination outcomes.

Our solution has attracted great interest for many reasons. One aspect of it that I would like to highlight here is the Work Engagement Package, which is designed to maximise return on investment incurred by a college in preparing learners for the workplace. Essentially, it's

designed to identify job vacancies from the hidden labour market and make these available exclusively to a college's own learners.

It has been estimated that only 30 per cent of all job vacancies are ever advertised either through agencies or on the internet. Through the Work Engagement package, The REED NCFE Partnership has the skills to target the other 70 per cent.

Employers will be able to access all the benefits of a tailored 'high street recruitment service', but at no cost. The relationships we build with employers will inform future curriculum delivery, further enhancing outcome and funding opportunities. And we'll balance engagement activities against curriculum need, e.g. securing work placement opportunities and balancing student demand for part-time work against their learning commitments.

To set this all in context and so we fully appreciate the challenge we face, between June and August this year, unemployment rose by 114,000 to 2.57 million, a 17 year high.

If we drill into those figures a little further we see that youth unemployment edged ever closer to the one million mark. Indeed, the number of unemployed 16 to 24-year-olds stood at 991,000; an increase of 71,000 on the previous month.

At the Association of Colleges (AoC) Annual Conference and Exhibition this week, James Reed and myself officially announced The REED NCFE

Partnership at a dedicated seminar. We were also joined by Lawrence Vincent, Principal and Chief Executive of Bournemouth and Poole College who explained why Bournemouth and Poole is the first college to officially come on board.

We want to give learners a head start in today's competitive labour market. Our aim is to proactively engage with them by setting up on-site college employment shops and further develop core skills such as labour market awareness, CV and interview techniques.

We want to use new and existing employer relationships in the community which the college serves to create pools of employment opportunities for learners. By applying our combined expertise to the process of matching candidates to vacancies, we ensure that sustainable employment is achieved for learners at the same time as providing ideal skills matches for local employers.

This is a package tailored to the local needs of learners and employers and our message to colleges is clear – this is a golden opportunity to enhance employment outcomes by brokering, managing and offering your learners a wide range of suitable job opportunities. These opportunities will include apprenticeships in the hidden labour market, enabling colleges to draw down significant additional funding.

In addition to the Work Engagement package, the model also provides learners with the REED

NCFE Level 1, 2 and 3 Awards in Job Search and Interview Skills. These qualifications are specifically designed to equip students with the skills and mindset they need to find and secure the right job for them.

Along with preparing learners for work, The REED NCFE Partnership provides colleges with an efficient destination tracking service delivering valuable careers information about students. A dedicated contact centre comprises trained consultants who are skilled in securing information from customers and successfully tracking their journey into and through employment.

Overall, the package presents a bold and imaginative solution that we have painstakingly researched before bringing to the market; but with unemployment amongst young people rising all the time, it could not be better timed.

David Grailey is the
Chief Executive of NCFE



Apprenticeships helping employers train their way through the economic downturn



As Chief Operating Officer for Asset Skills I regularly meet employers to discuss their training needs. It is clear the renewed popularity of apprenticeships is as evident in the industries we represent as it is everywhere else.

In property, they are being used to help young people find work and those who are unemployed or at risk of redundancy retrain into a new career. In facilities management, they are helping open up the sector to a younger workforce as well as improving skills of existing staff. The apprenticeship in cleaning is showing that there is scope to progress in this sector, and a large number of employers are using it as their training programme of choice. There is also a steady rise in candidates signing up to the new apprenticeships in housing at levels 2 and 3 launched in 2010.

In an industry with no tradition of apprenticeships, take up of the Property Services Apprenticeship has been encouraging. It comes in two parts – Residential Sales and Residential Lettings – the latter is helping many estate agents meet the new demand for rentals. Training in the lettings industry is essential for staff and managers and the apprenticeship helps give them a

good understanding of the vast amount of legislation involved.

The increase in estate agents taking on apprentices is helped by more training providers offering it. In London, Birmingham and Liverpool, training provider Bloom's job-matching service has created 60 brand new jobs for 16-24 year olds through the property apprenticeship – positive news for an industry hit so hard by the recession.

Elsewhere, Property Synergy and the Xperience group of lettings agents are putting 100 staff through the apprenticeship in lettings, while the NVQ in Property Sales is being used by Pattinsons in North East England. They ran two programmes in partnership with Hartlepool College. In one, 52 staff took the NVQ; in the other, the apprenticeship in sales helped around 20 unemployed people to train as self-employed estate agents.

We are also hoping to see more apprenticeship take up in surveying. The Surveying Apprenticeship is delivered by the Chartered Surveyors Training Trust. Leeds College of Building and Liverpool Community College are also planning to deliver the programme if enough candidates register, and we are looking for other training providers to start offering it.

As the outsourcing sector increases, so too does the need for skilled people to work in facilities management (FM), the industry responsible for the care and maintenance of commercial or public buildings like arenas, shopping centres, office complexes, schools, hospitals or hotels.

The Apprenticeship in Facilities Management came onto the market in 2010 and is growing in popularity following promotion by the Asset Skills UK Academy for Business Services. There are now an estimated 1,000 FM apprentices registered and expected to complete in the next two years.

Our UK Academy programme has recently been expanded into property and housing, and new apprenticeship promotion has been taking place.

The academy offers its employer members an account management service; help in identifying suitable training programmes; access to funding (where available) and the chance to save costs through collaboration. We've also built a trusted network of training providers offering our apprenticeships. A prospectus is available at www.assetskills.org/ukacademy.

Steven Proudfoot is the
Chief Operating Officer of Asset Skills

FE Week Expert

Let's talk about freedom



Picture by Nick Linford

There is a lot of talk these days about colleges being given more freedoms.

Freedom over what they deliver, freedom over the curriculum they offer, freedom over the new forms, structures and organisational models they adopt. And there are more freedoms coming down the track on governance – over instruments and articles, and over mergers.

No longer is it a world of top-down and targets. There are still many people in the sector who can't quite believe all this. "It's all very well," they say, "but it'll never happen. We've heard it all before."

"We can all achieve so much more in partnership than we can individually."

But what if this time it is different? Yes, money is tight and will get tighter. And the Government and its agencies will always want to know how and where public money is being spent. But if, as is promised, the scope for self-determination is stronger, that would have major implications for colleges – and for principals, chairs and governing bodies in particular.

How would people deal with these freedoms? Would some emerge blinking into the sunlight like the prisoners in Fidelio? Would some be unwilling to believe the door is open and keep asking for direction? Or would people want to explore the possibilities and reach for a changed future in this changing world?

Here at LSIS we are already exploring these issues. And in doing so we are clear we need to work closely with the AoC and other key partners. We can all achieve so much more in

partnership than we can individually. We would need to establish with the DfES and its agencies the scale and scope of the new freedoms. There will always be boundaries, even if they are more distant than at present. What are the "what if" questions we need to explore to test what colleges can – and can't – reach for?

And the changes would not just impact on colleges. As colleges are usually the biggest creature in the rock pool of FE and skills, a change in their lifestyle would have major implications for the rest of the sector's ecology. Indeed these changes may have implications beyond FE, where colleges begin new forms of relationship with schools, academies, universities, employers.

We would want to work with the AoC and others to help colleges and others understand what the new freedoms are, and then support those who want to take the first steps in exploring them further, moving towards how they best plan for a new future. And we would want to undertake action research into what is already happening, and into what works and what doesn't, disseminating our findings in ways which are most helpful to those next to embark on the journey.

Freedom to try new things. Freedom to understand what your community wants and needs – and indeed your communities, for they come in many kinds, local, regional, sectoral, national, virtual. Freedom to respond to those communities. Freedom to take risks and innovate – with confidence enough to learn from failure as well as success.

The challenges of freedom are many. LSIS looks forward to working with the sector to support you in exploring and exploiting the new potentials that freedom could bring.

Rob Wye is the Chief Executive of the Learning and Skills Improvement Service



FE Week at AoC conference

The Association of Colleges (AoC) Annual Conference is arguably the biggest event of the year in regards to the further education sector.

So here at *FE Week*, we thought it was only right to go all out in covering the biggest gathering of FE leaders and policy makers.

In the Hyatt hotel just opposite the ICC in Birmingham, our head graphic designer, Daniel Duke, and managing editor, Nick

Linford, recreated our entire London office from scratch.

This meant travelling to the city with two desktop computers, two widescreen monitors, a printer, set of speakers and nearly half a dozen laptops.

Not to mention a saxophone, acoustic guitar, microphone and additional speaker that would be used for our exclusive charity auction.

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FE Week campus round-up



Team UK praised for WorldSkills triumph

Record breaking youngsters were honoured by an Olympic winner for their achievements at WorldSkills London 2011.

All 43 members of Team UK were celebrated at a Welcome Back Reception at One Great George Street, London, which included a visit by the team's ambassador and Olympic 100 metre relay gold medallist Jason Gardener MBE.

At WorldSkills London 2011, held at ExCel in October, the team triumphed spectacularly, winning an impressive five gold, two silver and six bronze medals, which placed the UK 5th in the world – the best ever placing in the medals table.

Jason said: "Each member of Team UK should be incredibly proud of what they achieved at WorldSkills London 2011."

"Competing on an international stage takes a huge amount of training, dedication and focus and the team demonstrated they can take on the very best from across the world."

"Team UK are great ambassadors for the

UK's youth and I hope their achievements inspire future generations to achieve success."

Team UK is managed by the National Apprenticeship Service and they were supported by Edge, the independent education foundation, the premier supporter of Squad and Team UK and Brathay Trust, the Premier Training and Development Partner of Squad and Team UK.

Following the success of WorldSkills London 2011 it was announced by the Skills Funding Agency and the NAS that the annual cycle of WorldSkills UK National Competitions will culminate every year in a major event.

The 2012 cycle of WorldSkills UK National Competitions are now open for entry.

Exceptional participants in this cycle of competitions may be invited to compete for a place in Team UK for the next international WorldSkills Competition, which takes place in Leipzig, Germany in 2013.

For more, visit www.worldskillsuk.org

Newham College students ace English tests



Dozens of migrants have successfully completed English language tests at a college.

Around 50 learners, with family and friends, attended a special ceremony at the Newham College's East Ham campus to receive English for Speakers of Other Languages certificates.

The classes were attended by migrants from Asia, Africa and South America.

One course graduate, Subashini Garisan (27), who came from Sri Lanka over a year ago and now lives in East Ham said: "When I came to the UK, I did not know any English. I couldn't even answer the phone. It was like being a new born baby. Now, I feel I can speak English to people. I am doing voluntary work and I'm looking for a

job. I feel very happy about the opportunity the course gave to me."

Course manager Beverly Cook said: "For many, one of the biggest impacts is confidence."

"Before the course, most learners needed someone else to translate for them."

"The classes have enabled them to use English on their own to do normal tasks, like go to their doctor or buy a train ticket."

The college offered 15 different classes for the learners who spent one day a week for 17 weeks studying English at various levels.

Tutors took learners out of the classroom and encouraged them to carry out everyday activities such as visiting a museum or shopping on the high street.

Burton and South Derbyshire College student shows business flair with online company



very profitable."

Throughout his time at college, Thomas worked as a system developer at a local company and this helped him to develop the contacts and industry knowledge to get ahead.

Thomas Jenkins Components was officially registered as a business in mid-June 2011 just after he completed his full-time studies.

By month two, he was making a profit and developing a reputation through his eBay shop and by September he had created his own e-commerce site and secured a license as a reseller for companies including Apple, Samsung and Asus.

The business is now generating a healthy profit while Thomas has taken up his place at the University of Gloucester studying a BSc in Business Information Technology.

He added: "I want to have a good life and creating a business that I know will work is great."

"This is only the start. I hope to become one of the leaders in the industry and my future plans are to set up another business which helps people set up their dreams."

However, he is modest about his achievements to date.

He said: "Basically I'm just a really self-motivated person. I always work to achieve my goals and doing something I love is amazing."

Catherine Whitehead, programme area manager for technological industries at the college, said: "Thomas has been an astute and hard-working student and we're delighted that the course has helped to give him the confidence and entrepreneurial flair to start his own business so soon after completing the course."

A college student has launched his own e-commerce website selling IT components for big brand names.

Thomas Jenkins (19) achieved two distinctions and a merit on the BTEC National Diploma for IT Practitioners in June from Burton and South Derbyshire College.

However, within weeks of completing his studies, he was successfully operating his own online business -

www.thomasjenkinscomponents.com

He originally caught the self-employment bug when he entered an enterprise competition at college alongside fellow members of his course.

He said: "Studying at the college was a delight. The staff were friendly and the module I most enjoyed had to be the enterprise project."

"I could really express myself and my ideas to the group and I found that my idea could be



Weston College law students get legal advice

Legal experts of the future experienced the corridors of power on a visit to the Houses of Parliament and the Supreme Court.

Weston College's A-level law students headed to London, firstly to listen to Speaker John Bercow's traditional opening ceremony to Prime Minister's Question Time in the House of Commons.

They heard the Second Reading of the Health and Social Care Bill with peers Lord Robert Winston and former Court of Appeal Judge, Lord Mackay.

Weston College law lecturer Alexandra Sermon said: "It was fascinating."

"Students enjoyed the Parliament Education services interactive 'making laws' workshop to consolidate their understanding of the legislation then met Weston MP John Penrose before a tour of the Supreme Court."

Student Kirsty Bancroft said: "Some of us are applying to university to study law so the day provided an insight into the profession and the relationship between Parliament and the highest court in the land."

Labour leader and Shadow Business Secretary Q&A with Warwickshire College



Labour Party Leader, Ed Miliband and Shadow Business Secretary, Chuka Umunna, visited Warwickshire College's Rugby centre last week.

They met students studying electrical engineering before visiting the Power Industry Academy for a question and answer session with students, apprentices, employers, staff and governors.

Questions were asked on a number of topics including tuition fees, the environment, industry investment and new business opportunities.

The need to increase and value apprenticeships was highlighted, as well as the importance of education providers working with businesses to provide skills training for the future.



Leyton Sixth Form College sporting success

Sporty sixth form college students are celebrating a top performance at a festival.

Leyton Sixth Form College (LSC) finished third in the Host Borough Inter College Sports Festival after a week of fierce sporting competitions.

LSC triumphed in two sporting categories: men's basketball and mixed badminton, and secured second place in women's trampolining.

The Inter College Sports Festival is a sports participation and volunteering initiative where students from each of the nine participating colleges have the opportunity to compete in a series of free sporting competitions.

During the festival, 70 LSC students competed against other colleges, including; Newham College of Further Education, Greenwich Community College, BSix Sixth Form College, Newham Sixth Form College.

This year's Inter College Sports Festival was the biggest since its inception three years ago, with LSC participating for the first time. LSC hosted activities on day 4, where participants

from six colleges competed in a mixed badminton tournament.

Amy Rogers, PE and Sports coordinator, said: "Every LSC student represented the college proudly and displayed great sportsmanship, respect, enthusiasm and commitment to their opponents and their chosen sports."

The Festival has been granted the InspireMark; the badge of the London 2012 Inspire Programme, which recognises innovative and exceptional projects that are directly inspired by the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Seb Coe, chairman of London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games said: "The Inter College Sports Festival is encouraging young people to fulfil their potential."

"I am proud that with the help of partners such as LSC we are delivering on our vision to use the power of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games to boost young people's participation in sport."



City College Norwich makes trails for new outdoor adventure courses at Eaton Vale

Two impressive Mongolian yurts are the centrepiece of an exciting new link up between City College Norwich and Eaton Vale Activity Centre

The Sport (Outdoor Adventure) BTEC Extended Diploma is a practical, work-related course that prepares students for careers in outdoor adventure.

The course is unique in being able to offer students the BCU UKCC Level 1 Coach in Paddle Sport, the Climbing Wall Supervisors Award (CWSA) and Mountain Bike Instructors Award Scheme (MIAS) Level 1 and 2 training.

Whilst on the two-year course students develop skills, logbook experience and qualifications in outdoor pursuits, while at the centre they will gain invaluable work experience throughout the year and assist in delivering outdoor activities for some of the centre's 24,000 annual visitors, including scouts and guides, schools and corporate groups.

In addition, the centre will take on six students as full-time employees during the busy summer season.

City College Norwich principal Dick Palmer said: "Combining classroom study in the on-site yurts alongside access to a full range of outdoor activities means that the students can spend more time gaining their instructor qualifications and getting relevant industry experience under their belts."

"This is a fantastic development that will really help prepare the students for successful careers in outdoor adventure."

Richard Lang, operations manager at Eaton Vale Activity Centre, said "The real benefits of this partnership are that we are producing work-ready staff for local and national providers of outdoor activities."

Outdoor adventure student Ryan Wiltshire (19), from Taverham, said "The yurts add to the outdoor aspect of the course much better than a modern classroom, and we're right next to the water."

NCN's gourmet dinner is even better in 3D!



In collaboration with renowned French video game designer Eric Chahi, New College Nottingham's (ncn) head chef Tom Edwards and the College's Hospitality and Catering staff and students have pushed culinary boundaries, designing and implementing a five-course menu to rival Heston Blumenthal's creations.

My Dinner with Eric, part of Nottingham's annual GameCity videogame festival and held at ncn's training restaurant, presented

a multi-sensory evening which surprised diners and tantalised their taste buds through combining touch, taste, sight, and smell. The event also showcased the skills of ncn Technical Theatre students who designed and set up the lighting.

GameCity Director Iain Simons said: "Like most kids, I remember being told not to play with my food. Eric and Tom are now bringing something totally unique to the table, literally, and its time to ignore that rule."

FE Week events...

Colleges look for community spirit at 'dynamic' conference

Nick Summers

@summersnicholas

The Association of Colleges' Annual Conference is a chance for leading think tanks to launch their latest reports in front of a huge education audience.

The findings of the Independent Commission of Colleges in their Communities was led by Baroness Sharp of Guildford, the Chair of the Inquiry, when she was interviewed on centre stage during the first morning of the conference.

Her message couldn't have been clearer; colleges need to engage with their learners and local communities if they are to prosper in the economic downturn, and continue to call for the simplification of what is currently an 'unduly' and 'prescriptive' funding regime.

The report, titled 'A dynamic nucleus: Colleges at the heart of local communities', was launched on the first day of the AoC Annual Conference, and says the Government needs to cut additional 'red-tape' if colleges are to respond to the needs of employers and their local area.

Baroness Sharp of Guildford said: "If government could give greater flexibility to the over-rigorous funding regime and relax other 'red-tape', then colleges could and would deliver more in terms of community leadership. But they cannot do this alone.

"It requires more co-investment by individuals and employers; better information for the public and greater local accountability.

"We have received a great deal of support for this shared agenda of reform, with

colleges, their support bodies, and local and central government stepping up to the plate."

Recommendations in the report include establishing a community curriculum within colleges that can respond to local needs, the creation of an 'innovation' code that would allow greater funding flexibility, and a review of the Qualifications and Credit framework.

The Commission, which has been supported by NIACE, the AoC and the 157 Group, is also calling for a new generation of entrepreneurial leaders who can work closely with employers in a new community curriculum.

"Change is always a challenge and for some people too hard to face"

The report adds that a dedicated leadership centre should be constructed, focusing solely on improving the leadership and management within further education colleges.

Joy Mercer, AoC Director of Education Policy, said: "The recommendations will, if implemented, recognise the pivotal role that Colleges play at the centre of their communities.

"AoC believes that the funding freedoms advocated in the report will allow Colleges to really respond to need; the accountability outwards to employers, community groups and individuals and the focus on leaders

and managers with the right skills to work towards the social and economic well-being of their communities are vital."

The inquiry used a range of data to sources to draw up their findings, including two calls for evidence, a number of visits to further education colleges and regular discussions with staff and learners.

Baroness Sharp said the report had received very positive feedback so far, and she was confident the sector would take their recommendations on board.

"They're optimistic time frames, but if you don't try, you don't get. We've been surprised actually by the open door we seem to be pushing at in relation to the government," Baroness Sharp said.

"By and large both John Hayes on the one hand and Vince Cable on the other are very much behind this vision of colleges actually being the players who can help to promote community cohesion."

It's unclear whether this report will have any direct implications both on government policy and the strategy of colleges in the further education sector.

Community cohesion is a term frequently thrown around at the AoC Conference, but here it has been packaged into a report with context and practical, realistic recommendations.

John Hayes MP, Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning, seems to have taken notice anyway - so perhaps it's only a matter of time before the Commission's findings become the 'nucleus' of current debate.

AoC president Fiona McMillan, during her opening address to the conference, used the

platform to discuss community.

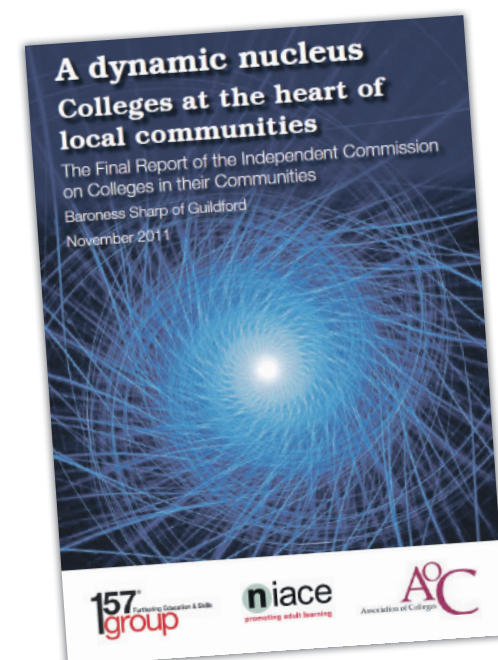
She said: "There is much that is done which is truly impressive in terms of colleges' engagement with their communities.

"But the expectations and the potential outcomes could be so much greater.

"On our part as colleges we need to be responsive and flexible and open to new opportunities.

"From the Business community we need a willingness to engage, to look for partnerships with colleges and the opportunity together to solve skills needs.

"I would say to any employer, 'give us the opportunity to show what we can do, and we will surprise you by our responsiveness and our capabilities'."



Delegates in the main hall at the Association of Colleges Annual Conference and Exhibition 2011 applaud speakers during the first session at the ICC in Birmingham



Opening performance by Stockton Riverside College

Pictures by Nick Linford



Fiona McMillan OBE, President of AoC



Kirsty Wark chaired the keynote session



Baroness Sharp of Guildford discusses the Inquiry into Colleges in their Communities

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FE Week events...

FE Week charity auction raises £10k for the Helena Kennedy Foundation

Nick Summers

@summersnicholas

Visitors to the Annual Association of Colleges (AoC) Conference spent their first night raising money for charity by bidding in a special celebrity auction.

The event, organised by *FE Week* and sponsored by Tribal and NCFE, raised exactly £10,000 for the Helena Kennedy Foundation (HKF), by auctioning luxury items such as tickets to a Premiership football game, a two night tree house experience and premium Apple gadget collection.

“Congratulations to everybody who is in the room here to support the HKF”

Shane Mann, one of the event organisers, and Nick Linford, Managing Editor of *FE Week*, opened the doors at Birmingham Town Hall and opened the proceedings in high spirits.

Guests arrived in stunning outfits including tuxedos, cocktail dresses and bow ties.

After a beautiful drinks reception visitors were led into the main dinner hall, where they were greeted by an acoustic set performed by *FE Week* Graphic Designer Daniel Duke.

Daniel performed a series of famous covers throughout the night including ‘I’m Yours’ by Jason Mraz, ‘Bare Necessities’ from The Jungle Book and ‘Don’t Stop Believing’ by

Journey.

The traditional room décor was lit up by sparking tables, artistic flower arrangements and an elaborate stage featuring a large slideshow projection.

Dr Ann Limb OBE, Chair of HKF, gave a formal introduction and described how the Foundation was launched at the AoC Conference in 1998: “We did so of course because we desperately wanted to ensure that further education got its place in the limelight.

“It’s not been a particularly easy journey for this foundation.

“It’s had its ups and downs. But I had a dream, and I had a friend in Helena, who wanted to support the idea. And of course, I had massive support from many of you and your predecessors in this room as FE college leaders.”

Ann Limb then announced the winner of the very first HKF Ambassadors Award, Carole Stott.

“We’ve been supported by many people, but principally by a group of trustees who have given their time freely, and endlessly to act as ambassadors for the foundation,” Ann Limb said.

“We wanted to make a special award tonight, the first ever HKF Ambassadors Award, to somebody who I count as a friend.

“You will know her as someone who has championed a very creative way of looking at the awarding of credit to students throughout their learning journey. She’s done so much for further education that she ought to be honoured in all sorts of ways.”

The charity auction had various forms of entertainment throughout the evening.

This included a professional magician,

capable of sealing a written, five letter word within an envelope without anyone’s knowledge, as well as a number of advanced card tricks.

“As well as doing what you’re [FE] supposed to do, in terms of helping young people, you also make up for what other people don’t do.”

A portrait artist was also doing the rounds, creating quick caricatures that were both humorous and realistic. Attendees were able to take their picture home once they gave a small donation to the Foundation.

Guests also had the chance to have their photograph taken with a Polaroid camera.

Barry Brookes, Director for Education and Skills Strategy at Tribal Group, said: “Congratulations to everybody who is in the room here to support the HKF, rather than going to the groovy KPMG dinner somewhere over the way.”

“From a personal point of view but also from a travelled point of view, the work that Ann, Helena and I guess you guys do for young people is absolutely critical.

“This is a challenging time - I don’t need to tell you about that. But what I don’t think is said enough, and it’s certainly not said enough in Whitehall or to ministers, is that actually as well as doing what you’re supposed to do, in terms of helping young people, you also make up for what other people don’t do when they’re supposed to be helping young

people.

“The sector really deserves a fantastic recognition of that.

“The work that Helena does in terms of enabling people to have those opportunities which they may not necessarily get, and the development work you do as a sector in terms of switching people on not just to learning, but becoming who they really should be.”

Guests were served a three course meal which included a salmon and prawn starter, beef and vegetables for the main course and hot sticky chocolate pudding for dessert.

This then made way for the highlight of the evening – the auction itself. Simon Fanshawe, world respected comedian, broadcaster and education consultant, managed the bidding with comic wit and enticed all of the guests into raising their paddles and giving some dosh to a worthwhile course.

Bidders were thrilled to walk away with digital cameras, gift vouchers and holidays at the charity auction. And of course, raising money for a great cause didn’t hurt either!

The evening was rounded off by two duet performances; freelance journalist Janet Murray and Daniel Duke performing ‘Fairytale of New York’ by The Pogues, as well as Nick Linford and Daniel Duke performing ‘I wish I knew how it would feel to be free’ by Nina Simone.

FE Week was thrilled to be able to hold an event which not only brought all the AoC Conference visitors in Birmingham together, but also raised a fantastic amount of money for charity.

The team at *FE Week* would like to thank everyone that attended the auction and helped raise £10,000 for the Helena Kennedy Foundation.



120 sector leaders attended the glitzy auction at Birmingham Council House



Carole Stott accepting the first ever HKF Ambassadors Award



Lynne Sedgmore, 157 Group and Baroness Sharp of Guildford



David Hughes, NIACE and Gemma Knott, 157 Group



Nick Linford, FE Week and Lsect



David Grailey, NCFE



Barry Brooks, Tribal



Dr Ann Limb OBE, Chair of HKF and Simon Fanshawe



The entertainment: Mark Cairns (Mind reader) and Janet Murray and our very own Daniel Duke performing Fairytale of New York



Paul Eeles, EMFEC bidding and Sarah Linford watching the action unfold



Beautiful floral arrangements for the tables were provided by learners from Solihull College

BW
Consultants

FE Associates

Quality Improvement Associates

BW Consultants, specialists in quality improvement and inspection services, is looking to strengthen its team of self-employed associate consultants and is inviting applications from suitably qualified professionals with recent inspection experience.

You will be a current Ofsted inspector with a strong track record in your curriculum area, be highly motivated, flexible and conversant with the issues facing the FE sector. You will also need to be prepared to travel and stay away from home when required. In return we offer competitive daily rates and a friendly and supportive environment for our associates. We are interested in hearing from inspectors across all subject sector areas and particularly those with experience in:

- Health and Social Care
- Hospitality and Catering
- Hair and Beauty
- Science and Maths

Closing date for applications is Monday 5th December.

To apply please send your CV to Paulina Wall, BW Consultants, 70a Sandon Rd, Southport, PR8 4QD or email info@bw-consultants.co.uk



**W
S
C** WEST
SUFFOLK
COLLEGE

Head of School, Employer Responsiveness - Engineering and the Built Environment Up to £41,718 pa Full Time

You will lead and manage our work with employers across the Eastern region. With the support of a team of work based learning co-ordinators you will oversee the development of our training and assessment for apprentices and other work place learners in areas such as engineering, manufacturing, construction and new developments within electrical power and building services areas.

You will have extensive professional experience and knowledge gained from within the Engineering and/or the Built Environment sectors as well as knowledge of the vocational qualification structure and apprenticeships. You will possess technology based qualifications at degree level together with Training and Assessment of Workplace Learning. Strong organisation and leadership skills will also be essential.

Interviews: 22 December 2011.

Head of School, Construction Craft Up to £41,718 pa Full Time

You will be managing and developing all aspects of the outstanding Construction Craft School in an exciting environment with excellent facilities. This is an opportunity for an ambitious individual with industry and educational experience, committed to enhancing the student experience. You will have a teaching commitment in one of the School's curriculum areas and will work closely with the faculty management team to maintain outstanding provision and further develop employer links, work-based learning and HE opportunities.

You will have professional experience, relevant qualifications at a high level and an understanding of curriculum management. Strong organisation and management skills will also be essential.

Interviews: 12 December 2011.

Both posts are eligible for a final salary pension scheme.

Closing date: 1 December 2011.

Full information about the posts and all other College vacancies is available on our website www.westsuffolk.ac.uk alternatively contact the HR Dept, (indicating the vacancy title) on (01284) 716339.



www.westsuffolk.ac.uk



Barking & Dagenham College

Your route to success

The College, located in east London, within the heart of the Thames Gateway - the largest regeneration area in Europe - offers outstanding learning and training opportunities for all. Innovation, Enterprise and Creativity are but some of the values that drive our organisational behaviours.

We are first choice locally in technical and vocational education and training, with 11,000 full and part-time learners, 700 Apprenticeship trainees and 250 employers as customers. Serving a diverse set of communities locally, we offer a range of flexible and customised programmes, including Training for Work, Skills for Jobs and Entry Level through to Advanced and Higher Level vocational education and training options.

Our training environments are industry standard and endorsed by large and smaller employers. Our workforce is committed to putting learners and customers first. We achieve this first and foremost, through great teaching, training, assessment and progression guidance. In addition, our approach with people is personalised and motivational, encouraging and inspiring everyone, on their route to success - through our Learner Help Centre or our Business Innovation & Enterprise team.

If you want to join us on our journey in becoming A Truly Great College - Passionate about Success, then we have a vacancy for the right person, in the following position.



Head of Skills Centre

Salary C £60,000 pa

An exciting, partnership opportunity has arisen for the right person with the right skill set...

Are you aspirational and able to connect with young people?

Are you driven by high standards, which are inclusive for all?

Are you innovative and able to create opportunities for young people in their chosen career?

And, are you personally ambitious to progress your own career?

If so, then Barking & Dagenham College wants to hear from you...

In partnership with Barking and Dagenham Council, our bold and dynamic local authority, who have funded the building, we are on schedule to open this brand new, industry standard Skills Centre, in the heart of Barking Town Centre.

The curriculum will offer a practical and vocational curriculum for youngsters under nineteen, from foundation to advanced, technician level, in sustainable construction and engineering, sustainable food supply chains, hairdressing and beauty therapy. The Skills Centre is scheduled to be open and operational for September 2012 and there will be a commercial salon and restaurant open to the public, providing our learners with real work employment skills.

The Skills Centre is the result of an excellent partnership between the college, the council and local employers and we are now looking to source an inspirational leader to lead and manage this innovative learning environment. This is the ideal training ground for a future head teacher.

If this opportunity interests you and you want to be part of this unique development and help to plan the curriculum and appoint the staff, you should be passionate about education, training and personalised support for young people.

You should have excellent people skills to liaise with a range of stakeholders and you should be a creative leader, with demonstrable experience of successful leadership within a culture of vocational and academic excellence. You will have the ability to motivate others, enthusiastically promote both the Centre and its courses and be skilled in the management of people and resources.

The closing date for receipt of completed applications is Friday 25th November 2011 and interviews will take place on Wednesday 14th December 2011.

All applicants wishing to apply can do so by downloading an application pack from our website: www.barkingdagenhamcollege.ac.uk

All disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria for the above post will be offered an interview. We welcome applications from ethnic minority applicants as we are currently under represented at this level.



ENGAGE

ENRICH

ENJOY

With around 1,800 students undertaking a diverse range of studies, we are the largest A-level provider in the county and draw on a wide catchment area. Our size allows us to offer real choice to students, and yet we endeavour to deliver individual care and support to all those who study here. With A level pass rates hitting 99% and 80% of our UCAS applicants going on to higher education, we are proud of what we have achieved in recent years, but we are keen to continue to adapt and to innovate to sustain high standards in competitive times.

Our new Principal will inherit a dedicated and very committed staff group, keen to make their contribution to the future of the college. You will develop and promote a vision for the college that will anticipate and respond to changes in our sector, as well as considering new opportunities for the college, both academic and commercial. We expect you'll be experienced at Deputy level or above, with specific sixth form/tertiary experience. Your strong operational management skills should be enhanced by good strategic awareness, an appetite for change and the capacity to deliver it. Outward looking, you'll be keen to identify opportunities for growth through partnership working, while keeping a strong focus on appropriate internal systems and processes. You should be a team leader and team player in equal measure, ready to lead and motivate from the front, but also ready to devolve and share responsibility, developing talent and capacity within your staff group.

PRINCIPAL £COMPETITIVE

East Norfolk Sixth Form College has a well-established reputation for academic success and a strong track record in supporting students to recognise, nurture and achieve their potential. It's a place where talent can thrive and where committed and passionate education professionals can really make a difference.



For more information, please visit www.ensfcprincipal.co.uk or contact Mike Galloway or Trudy Searle at Navigate on 0844 800 5300. Closing date: 25 November. Interviews 12 & 13 December.

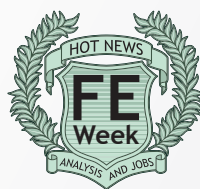


ENSFC aims to create a caring and diverse working and learning community where every individual is valued and respected.



EAST NORFOLK
Sixth Form College

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Whether you are selling to colleges, private training providers, policy makers or associated stakeholders, there isn't a more targeted publication to advertise with.

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For recruitment advertising solutions please contact Claire Edwards on claire.edwards@feweek.co.uk or contact the advertising team on 0208 123 4778



TRURO AND PENWITH COLLEGE

We are one of the top Tertiary Colleges in the country and have been awarded Beacon College status in recognition of this. At the last inspection the College was awarded Grade One Outstanding in all areas. If you would like to play a role in our continued success we currently have the following vacancies:

Full time Automotive Engineering Lecturer required in: **VEHICLE REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE**

Salary will be based on a band in the range of
£23,510 - £34,911

To start in January 2012

Applicants should hold a minimum of a level 3 qualification in their trade and have at least five years experience working within in the motor industry. Applicants should also hold a recognised teaching qualification. Assessor/Verifier Awards A1/V1 or equivalent would also be desirable. We are seeking suitably experienced individuals to join our highly successful team. The successful candidate will be responsible for the coordination and delivery of Motor Vehicle Studies from Entry Level to Level 3 programmes including Apprenticeships.

Full time Lecturer required in

CATERING

Salary will be based on a band in the range of
£23,510 - £30,237

To start as soon as possible

Fixed Term until 31 August 2012

We are seeking to appoint a full time lecturer in Catering to join our team in a new Catering team based at Truro. The ideal applicant will have extensive experience of Catering and a proven track record in education sector, teaching experience and a commitment to the delivery of an outstanding learning experience to our students. Applicants should hold an NVQ level 3 or equivalent, a Certificate in Education or equivalent and the A1 assessors' award. A verifier's award (V1 or equivalent) would also be desirable. Previous applicants will be carried forward.

Full time Lecturer required in

CHEMISTRY

Salary will be based on a band in the range of
£23,510 - £30,237

To start in February 2012

Fixed Term until 30 November 2012 to cover maternity leave

Applicants are invited to join our highly successful and energetic Science and Technology Team. You will be required to teach across a range of practical/academic courses including AS/A2 Chemistry (OCR syllabus A) and IB Chemistry. There may be the opportunity to contribute to our other Biochemistry-related programmes such as the Extended Diploma in Applied Science (Forensics) or the Foundation Degree in Biomedical Studies. Applicants should have good practical abilities and be keen to act as a Personal Tutor to a group of Science students.

Applications for the above posts should reach us by **FIRST POST ON: Friday 25 November 2011.** Curriculum Vitae are not accepted, Application Forms only. Successful candidates will be notified within 4 weeks of the closing date.



To apply please call 01872 267000

email: recruitment@truro-penwith.ac.uk

or download a Job Description and Application form from: www.truro-penwith.ac.uk

Truro and Penwith College,
College Road, Truro, Cornwall TR1 3XX

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER





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Employability
Service

ncfe
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Last year alone, over 340,000 learners from over 2,000 colleges, schools and training organisations chose NCFE as the awarding organisation to help them move their careers forward. Dynamic and responsive with a buzz that sets it apart, NCFE is proud to be recognised for its exceptional customer service and friendly approach.

Our product portfolio is made up of:

- Apprenticeships
- Progression to Apprenticeships
- Foundation Learning qualifications
- Key/Basic Skills/Functional Skills
- Enrichment qualifications
- Accreditation Services
- A range of vocational qualifications for schools

National Awarding Organisation, NCFE, is passionate about designing, developing and certificating diverse, nationally recognised qualifications and awards.

Visit us at www.ncfe.org.uk and use our qualification finder to view all of the qualifications that we offer, or call us on 0191 239 8000.

FE Week Sudoku challenge

9				1	6		4	
2	4				7			
	7	1		2				6
		2		9		4		3
			1		2			
3		9		4		2		
6				8		3	2	
			4				6	1
	8		2	6				5

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

Solutions: Next week

	1			3				
9						1		4
5					1		2	
			4				6	3
	5			1			9	
2	8				3			
	6		1					9
3		7						6
				6			4	

Difficulty:
EXPERT

Last Week's solutions

2	1	8	3	4	6	9	5	7
5	7	3	8	1	9	2	4	6
6	9	4	5	7	2	3	8	1
1	8	7	6	3	5	4	2	9
4	6	9	2	8	1	5	7	3
3	5	2	4	9	7	1	6	8
7	4	5	1	6	3	8	9	2
9	2	1	7	5	8	6	3	4
8	3	6	9	2	4	7	1	5

Difficulty:
EASY

8	5	7	1	2	3	4	6	9
2	9	4	5	6	7	3	1	8
1	3	6	4	9	8	2	7	5
9	4	2	7	1	6	5	8	3
5	7	8	9	3	2	6	4	1
3	6	1	8	5	4	9	2	7
6	8	5	3	4	1	7	9	2
7	2	3	6	8	9	1	5	4
4	1	9	2	7	5	8	3	6

Difficulty: **HARD** Date to remember: 11/11 - Remembrance Day

FE Week mini-mascot

Follow the adventures of *FE Week's* biggest and smallest fan!



"Mostly this week I have been trying hard to get my five-a-day"

You can also follow our *FE Week* mini-mascot on Twitter @daniellinford